

**GREENFIELDS BENCH, PESTICIDES AND WATER QUALITY
JOINT VOLUNTARY ADVISORY AND STEERING COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 4, 2008
FAIRFIELD COMMUNITY HALL**

Questions or comments? Please contact: Rick Mulder, Montana Dept. of Agriculture, 444-5422, rmulder@mt.gov, or Mark Major, Teton Co. Extension, 466-2491, mbmajor@montana.edu.

On December 4, 2008 the Fairfield Bench Voluntary Advisory and Steering Committees met at the Fairfield Community Hall for the yearly update and discussion.

In attendance were Linda Johns, MDA; Michael Konen, farmer; Burton Ginther, retired chemist; John Larson, EPA; Mark Major, Teton County Extension; Rick Mulder, MDA; Terry Nugent, farmer; Alan Rollo, SRWG; and Christian Schmidt, MDA

The following are highlights from the presentations and those discussions:

Rick opened the meeting with introductions

PESTIDICDE UPDATES - Rick handed out spreadsheets of pesticide data and a map of sampling sites. Key items on the handouts were new aquatic benchmarks and new drinking water standards. Two new chemicals were detected but all were still at very low concentrations. Discussion on difference of aquatic levels vs. drinking water levels was explained that it depends upon impacts to those different entities.

In 2009 MDA plans on continuing to sample but will rotate surface water sites since there has not been hardly any change over several years.

In 2009 will also rotate ground water wells to sites that have not been tested for several years. Will keep several sites under long-term monitoring for trend analysis.

NITRATE CONCENTRATIONS – Christian gave a power point presentation on nitrate trends in groundwater and possible causes. This is the same presentation that was given at the 2008 AWRA conference. The past data used was from a 1980s data set and the recent 1998 – 2008 data set. The data reviewed looked only as groundwater but included climate changes over that same timeframe for comparison.

Median nitrate concentrations have increased from the 1980s data to the 1998-2008 data sets. It is perceived that precipitation does play a key role in nitrate levels because the aquifer on the Fairfield Bench is primarily created by irrigation. Also causing changes is the large changes from flood to sprinkler systems. Conclusions included change from flood to pivot and precipitation levels have been a major influence in nitrate levels found in the groundwater.

EDUCATION EVENTS – Mark updated the group on the 2008 training events that included an IWM workshop and a sprayer clinic. Additional training in 2009 and beyond depends upon farmer needs. Will look at GPS training as one program and will try to put on several other workshops tailored to the Fairfield area.

Next meeting will be in fall of 2009. With no other business before the group, the meeting was adjourned.